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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [RS](#) [OSCE](#)
SUBJECT: NATO: MARCH 27 HLTF AGREES ON NAC STATEMENT

REF: A. A) STATE 030932 GUIDANCE

[1](#)B. B) NATO: SG(2008)020 AND ANNEX

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Richard G. Olson, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. At the March 27 HLTF meeting Allies reached agreement on the U.S.-German-sponsored draft NAC Statement on CFE (ref b). While all Allies were fully supportive of the concept and much of the content of the draft statement, a few (e.g. Turkey, the Baltics, Romania, and Bulgaria) required language changes in order to finally agree to it. At the end of the HLTF meeting all but Romania had authority to agree to the modified statement on the spot. As a result, the statement was placed under silence until the following day. Silence was not broken, and thus it went to the NAC under silence for final approval (The NAC approved it by silence on the 28th). The text was issued publicly by NATO on the NATO Website (www.nato.int) on March 28.

[1](#)2. (C) The U.S. also used the meeting to brief Allies on the March 17-18 U.S.-Russia 2 plus 2 meeting in Moscow and to provide greater detail regarding the March 17 meeting U.S. acting Under Secretary of State Dan Fried and Russian Director for Security and Disarmament Anatoly Antonov held on the CFE parallel actions package. END SUMMARY.

Consultations and Bilaterals

[1](#)3. (C) HLTF Rep DAS Karin L. Look briefed Allies on CFE elements of the March 17-18 U.S.-Russia 2 plus 2 meeting in Moscow, including the March 17 meeting between U.S. Acting Under Secretary of State Dan Fried and Russian Director for Security and Disarmament Anatoly Antonov, per ref A. Look explained that the Fried-Antonov meeting touched on all the elements of the "package," but noted that discussion focused on Georgia and Moldova. On Georgia, the Russian side suggested considering transparency as an alternative to documentary transfer of Gudauta. While the U.S. agreed to discuss transparency ideas with Georgia, the U.S. did not agree that it could substitute for documentary transfer. On Moldova, it appeared initially that there was the possibility for an agreement on the key PKF element, but Look said that when U/S Fried tried to capture that agreement, the Russians backed-off. Look also noted that it appeared to the U.S. delegation that Antonov has instructions to discuss the "package" but does not have instructions to close on it. France (Grand) also noted that there were "2 plus 2 talks" in

Paris on 11-12 March. At those talks, Russia complained of U.S. negotiation methods, but France rebuffed Russia stating that in fact it was NATO, not Russia, that had so far shown all the flexibility in the discussion.

NAC Statement

¶4. (C) German rep (Biontino) and U.S. rep Look introduced the U.S.-German draft NAC statement on CFE (ref b). All Allies were enthusiastically supportive of both the concept and substance of the draft statement and came prepared to work and finalize that statement at the meeting. That said, Allies recognized that this would be the first instance of publicly acknowledging their support for the specific elements of the "parallel actions package," and worked to ensure that both their real and perceived national security equities were protected in the statement.

¶5. (C) Most Allies were prepared to accept the U.S.-German text as written. However, Turkey, the Baltic States, and Romania had concerns which took hours to resolve.

-- Turkey and Norway wanted to mention the flank issue early in the text as a key element of the existing CFE regime and to amend the discussion of future review of the Adapted Treaty to make no specific mention of Russian flank concerns. Norway was very supportive of Turkey's concerns.

-- The Baltic States were uneasy about stating publicly their readiness to proceed with "detailed discussions", including with Russia, on the conditions for Baltic accession to the Adapted Treaty. They also did not want to be singled out by name. Hours of painstaking discussion in the meeting and on the margins and ultimately some U.S. flexibility on the exact language, closed this issue.

-- Romania had a laundry list of changes, all directed at clarifying the conditionality between movement by NATO on ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty, and Russian fulfillment of Istanbul commitments.

¶6. (C) On more than one occasion during the course of the day it appeared consensus on the text might prove impossible. French rep Grand played a key role in keeping the discussion on track, pointing out that NATO's public diplomacy needed to be more aggressive. He argued that the synopsis of the parallel actions package that appeared in the U.S.-German text would demonstrate that NATO had taken Russia's concerns seriously and responded effectively.

¶7. (C) The HLTF adjourned during lunch and formed an informal drafting group (that involved HLTF reps from all key players on the draft) that reached consensus (minus a few issues to be worked out in the plenary session) on the text for the HLTF plenary to meet on that evening after reps had had the opportunity to consult with their capitals. In this drafting meeting:

-- Turkey and Norway stuck to their guns on the need to have a generic reference only to the future review of the Treaty, but accepted the U.S. suggestion, which emerged in the drafting group, to refer specifically to the flank as one on a list of key Russian concerns addressed by the parallel actions package.

-- Romania and Germany sparred throughout the drafting meeting over language on the relationship between the Istanbul commitments and ratification of Adapted CFE. Largely because the text already included formulaic language concerning that conditionality, Romanian concerns were regarded by most Allies as unreasonable. German rep Biontino was reluctant to modify other parts of the text materially to address Romanian concerns, and Romanian rep Micula did not prioritize his list of changes. Most of the changes did not focus on a central theme that may have allowed Romania to make its key point about Russia fulfilling its Istanbul

commitments prior to all Allies completing ratification procedures.

-- The Baltics pressed their concern about pre-entry into force "detailed discussions" with Russia and about the need for internal NATO efforts to precede any meeting on this issue with Russia. They also were emphatic that they should not be included in the statement with any specificity. During the drafting session all issues except the reference to "detailed discussions" were dealt with satisfactorily.

¶8. (C) After the drafting group completed its work, delegations consulted with capitals on hopes of being able to agree to the text of the statement and send it to the NAC that evening. When the HLTF reconvened at 1900 hours, all but Romanian rep (Micula) had authority to close on the statement. Specifically:

-- The Baltics (Estonia in particular) pleaded with the U.S. rep to drop the word "detailed" from the phrase describing pre-entry-into-force discussions of their accession plans. Based on consultation with Acting U/S Fried, the U.S. rep agreed, stating for the record, however, that this change would not alter the content of the parallel actions package itself. The change was acceptable to the U.S. as a characterization of the package in a summary public document.

-- For the Turks this was a package deal: Ahmet Gun said Turkey,s flexibility on the text for this document would require Allies to accommodate Turkey,s position in the text on CFE for the NAC communiqu, and in the SPC,s arms control paper. A near-meltdown with the German rep on this issue presaged subsequent problems agreeing on the text of the CFE paragraph for the Summit Declaration via HLTF Deputies meetings on April 1-2.

-- Romanian rep Micula stated that Romania needed until Friday morning (as "the President" was reviewing the draft statement) and asked that the text to be placed under silence until then. Ultimately the document was placed under HLTF silence procedure ending at 1100 hours Friday with a NAC silence procedure to follow, ending at 1800 hours Friday.

¶9. (C) Comment: Allies readily agreed on the importance of getting the NAC Statement released prior to the start of the NATO Summit in Bucharest. It is a strong text with a strong message to Russia of NATO,s solidarity and commitment to CFE and the Istanbul commitments. All Allies had to compromise in order to produce the document. This document reflects the first time that the Allies have publicly affirmed adherence to the specific elements of the parallel actions package. The statement,s main message is to Russia: Moscow cannot drive wedges within the Alliance on CFE, and NATO will not abandon Georgia and Moldova.

¶10. (C) After the NAC Statement had been placed under silence, the HLTF decided that the remaining documents, especially the CFE paragraph in the NATO Summit Communiqu should be discussed by HLTF-deputies the following day after the NAC statement had cleared the silence procedure and was agreed.

Next HLTF Meeting

¶11. (SBU) The NATO International Staff proposed that the next HLTF meeting be held on May 8. France objected due to that date being a national holiday and the IS noted the previous week also contained a holiday (May 1st) as well. It was decided that after Bucharest the IS would look for a different date and propose that to HLTF Representatives.
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